

**As Introduced
133rd General Assembly
Regular Session H. B. No. 155
2019-2020**

Representatives Schaffer, Rogers

**Cosponsors: Representatives Romanchuk, Becker, Smith, K., Riedel, Ginter,
Perales, Miller, A., Manning, G., Weinstein, West**

A BILL

To amend section 149.30 and to enact section 155.28 of the Revised Code to prohibit a war relic

located on public property or cemetery association property from being sold, disturbed, or otherwise disposed of, except under certain circumstances, and to designate this act as the "Ohio Veterans' Heritage Protection Act."

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Testimony submitted by:
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May 11, 2019



My name is Linda Jean (Limes) Ellis and I live Lyndhurst, Cuyahoga County, Ohio. I was born and raised in Lorain, Ohio. I have long been an advocate for preserving and protecting all of Ohio’s cemeteries, and every grave marker and historical artifact that graces their hallowed grounds.

I am the creator and admin. of “[Preserving Ohio’s Cemeteries](#)”, a closed Facebook Group with 1,300 members. I also have a 10-year running blog: “[Exploring Almost Forgotten Gravesites in the Great State of Ohio](#)” that has an additional focus of preserving and protecting Ohio’s cemeteries – all of our beautiful and historic cemeteries – because: “**All Cemeteries Matter**”!

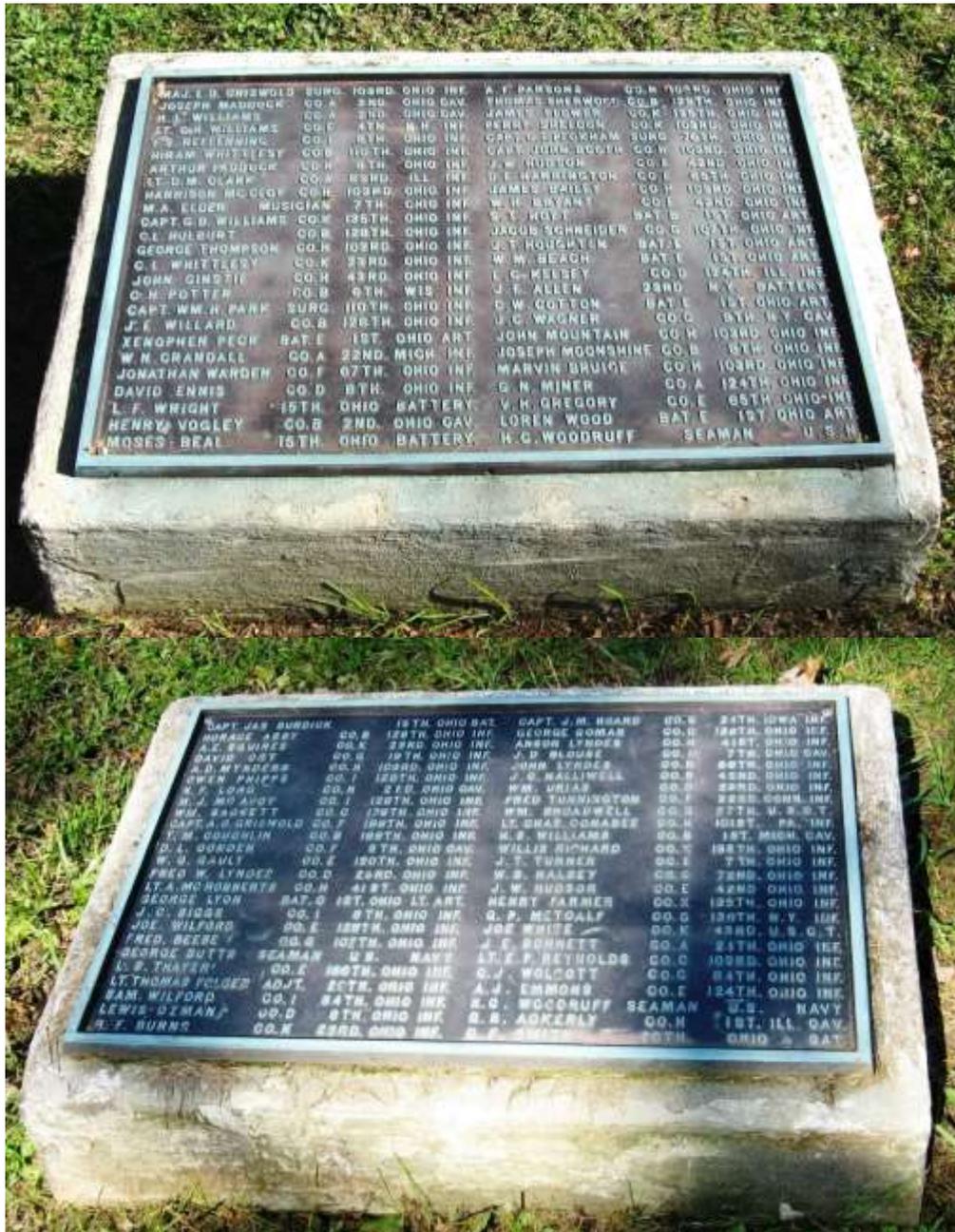
Over the years, several blog posts have been devoted to the subjects of [veterans and their issues](#) and [vandalism](#).

There are veterans buried in virtually every cemetery in Ohio who served in every war from the American Revolution to those in our modern times. This is true whether the cemetery is large or small; currently with active burials or long abandoned; in large cities, quaint villages, or in remote rural areas. We can find veteran gravesites in all of these categories of cemeteries. Commemorative monuments, plaques, and markers honoring individual veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice or those erected in tribute to a local Ohio regiment are often prominently placed at a cemetery.

A large number of these commemorative monuments, statues, markers, memorials, and plaques are long-standing landmarks that regular visitors are accustomed to seeing at their community cemeteries and at others of interest to them they visit. So, it is essential to ensure these revered historical artifacts erected to honor veterans are preserved for future generations as well. The implementation and enforcement of stronger laws (Ohio Revised Codes), such as what HB155 can provide, will add those needed protections.

I am sharing on the following pages some photos taken October 17, 2017 of memorial plaques and monuments erected at Ridgelawn Cemetery in Elyria, Lorain County, Ohio.:

From Ridgelawn Cemetery in Elyria, Lorain County, Ohio.
[Ridgelawn Cemetery on Find A Grave.:](#)









From Ohio Civil War Central.:

<https://www.ohiocivilwarcentral.com/entry.php?rec=1626>

“Ohioans have built at least 295 monuments to commemorate Civil War veterans, civilians, political leaders, and war-related events in the state. Eighty-six of the state’s eighty-eight counties contain Civil War monuments, with Hamilton County, Lucas County, Lorain County, Brown County, and Franklin County each boasting ten or more memorials each.

Only Clinton County and Noble County do not contain Civil War monuments.

In 1896, veterans of Company K of the 135th Regiment Ohio Volunteer Infantry constructed a monument in the Ridgelawn Cemetery in Elyria, Ohio. The memorial commemorated five members of Company K who died during the Civil War. Consisting of a granite base that is twelve feet high and a sheet copper statue in the form of a skirmishing Union soldier that is six feet tall, the monument was designed and constructed by the W.H. Mullins Company of Salem, Ohio. This business featured the monument in its company catalog, *The Blue and the Gray: Statues in Stamped Copper and Bronze*(page 25) in 1913.

The memorial contains the following inscription: "Erected by the surviving comrades of Company K 135th OVI to the Memory of Oscar N. Bush Died Aug 3 1864 Baltimore MD Aged 17 Years Charles Eason Killed July 6th 1864 Maryland Heights MD Aged 17 Years Ernest Morehouse Died July 2 1864 Martinsburg W. Va Aged 18 Years Edgar A. Phillips Killed July 6th 1864 Maryland Heights MD Aged 17 Years James B. Warden Died May 19th 1864 Martinsburg W VA Aged 17 Years."

In 1999, the statue was painted in the standard colors of a Union uniform, but the monument remains in good overall condition.

The monument is located in Ridgelawn Cemetery (285 Columbus Street) in Elyria.”



[Elmwood Cemetery, Lorain, Ohio](#)



OTHER LINKS AND RESOURCES:

Civil War Monuments in Ohio:

[Search the Monuments database](#)

<http://library.cincymuseum.org/civilwar/ohio-monuments.htm>

Greenville Union Cemetery, Veterans Monument - Greenville, Ohio:

<http://greenvilleunion.com/Veterans-Monument-and-Cannon>

News story:

<https://www.mariontwp.org/phillip-dreyer-cemetery/>

“Two veterans from the war of 1812 survived that conflict and are buried in this cemetery. Three veterans of the Civil War are interred here, two of which were killed in action, and a third that was wounded, discharged, and then later died from complications of the wounds. The last recorded burial was in 1869. In 1871, Benjamin and Sarah Morris deeded this cemetery to Marion Township to be used forever as a burial ground. For 122 years the cemetery was neglected, vandalized.”